

**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2017-2018





Our History

Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto (NWRCT) began with a dedicated group of Indigenous women who recognized the need for a gathering place in Toronto where Indigenous women could share resources, support one another, and practise their traditional ways. In 1985, this vision resulted in the downtown basement office that affectionately became known as "The Pit."

Today, NWRCT provides a safe and welcoming environment for all Indigenous women and their children in the Greater Toronto Area. We host a variety of cultural activities for our clients and the general public, including the annual Minaake Awards, Sisters In Spirit Vigil, and Winter Solstice.

As a registered charity, funded by government programs as well as public and private donations, we offer life-enhancing resources, cultural ceremonies and teachings, skill development, and programs to build our capacities and celebrate our cultures.

We honour the vision of our founders as we support urban Indigenous women and children from all walks of life. We build self-sufficiency, develop collective capacity, and create real change by providing individual and community support and cultural programming.

We welcome all self-identifying Indigenous women (cisgender, transgender, and two-spirited people) and their children. We believe strong women equal a strong community. We know that when we invest in our women and girls, we help support not only individuals, but society as a whole. Moreover, this investment has lasting positive effects on future generations.

NWRCT is a registered charity funded by government programs as well as public and private donations. Our work and direction is guided by the Seven Sacred Teachings: Wisdom, Love, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility, and Truth. Our teachings, traditions, and cultures inform all of our activities.



Reconnection to Culture

Cultural programming and ceremonies provide the opportunity to participate in ceremony and traditions, learn with knowledge keepers, and connect with spirit and community.

Cultural programs have always been part of Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto. Some of the most profound healing for our women and children comes from reconnecting to the traditional ways.

Many clients of the Centre have been displaced and disconnected from their culture and spirit.

Reconnection through ceremony and traditions while honouring their spirit provide Indigenous women in Toronto with the opportunity to heal, grow, and find their rightful place in society.

Access to the Medicines, Healers, Drumming Circles, Ceremonies, Circles, and more are opportunities the Centre provides to reconnect and promote healing and wellness.

MESSAGE

From the Executive Director

Ahneen, Hello,

Excited, optimistic, humbled, and honoured are some of the many words that come to mind as I step into the position of Executive Director with Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto.

Taking on this role is not a decision I have made lightly. I feel a great sense of responsibility – to the community, the team, our funders/partners, and all of my Sisters. I am committed to fostering the health and longevity of NWRCT and I am honoured to contribute to the healing and growth of our community.

I will endeavour to do so through the reconnection of culture and wellness in all directions.

NWRCT has been going through a time of transition and has experienced several changes. I believe this has had a great impact on our clients and community. As we now enter a season of rebuilding, in my judgement we need to start by listening to the voices of those most impacted. In the coming months, NWRCT will be seeking feedback through community engagements to provide us with honest suggestions on how to improve the delivery of programs and services.

I strive to lead in a way that is inclusive, transparent, and collaborative, with a focus on the positive growth of the team. It is important that leaders foster the growth of our peers and colleagues, with the ultimate goal that they will surpass us in knowledge, wisdom, and contributions to the well-being of the community.

Despite the challenges of recent months, our foundation remains strong. We will continue to use the Seven Sacred Teachings for direction and grounding. We will work to fulfill the mandate of NWRCT in the healthiest way possible and as a united team of staff.

I will strive to do things in a good way but this is not something I can do alone. I will ask the Grandmothers to develop a circle of care to support my journey. I will seek unity towards the common goal of the health and well-being of our community. I will lean on the wisdom of others and the strength of our community to direct our path.

I hope for us to push one another, ask the difficult questions, and break down what we currently see as the standard. We have the opportunity to lift each other up to our rightful place and to lift the woman to a place of empowerment and strength. NWRCT is committed to serving our Indigenous women, and we know in doing so we are serving the entire community. If our women are strong, we are all strong.

I look forward to working and building with each of you,

Miigwetch,



PAMELA HART

Message from the Board

Ahneen, Boozhoo, Tansi, She:kon, Hello to the, Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto (NWRCT) membership, funders, and supporters. It has been a busy year where we were faced with many opportunities and challenges. As the Board of Directors reflects over the year, it warms the hearts of all Board Directors to see how committed, supportive, and understanding the staff, management, clientele, funders, program partners, and donors have been and continue to be.

One of the Board's biggest challenges was accepting the resignation of Sarah Midanik, Executive Director, in October 2017. Sarah was the Executive Director for two years and the Board would like to acknowledge and thank her for her hard work in providing critical services and programming for Indigenous women and children in the Greater Toronto Area. We wish Sarah all the best in her future endeavours!

To the staff and management, miigwetch for your hard work and dedication and continually making it a priority to create positive change and experiences for Indigenous women and children in the Toronto area. We look forward to the great work the Centre provides, and to continuing to create a safe and welcoming environment and working collaboratively in meeting and exceeding the expectations and needs of the Centre's clients while supporting one another.

The Board of Directors would like to acknowledge and thank our funders, program partners, donors, volunteers, and clients for their amazing contributions to the critical work that the Centre provides.

In closing, the Board is pleased to welcome Pamela Hart as Executive Director of the NWRCT (effective April 2018). Pamela is a member of the Chippewas of Georgina Island. She has worked on the front line for many years offering client care to address the various issues such as addictions, mental health, violence against women, trauma, and homelessness. The latter years of her career have been in management positions working with multidisciplinary teams to enhance the services and programs offered to those seeking support. Pamela is dedicated and focused and is passionate about making positive impacts in the community.

We are very confident and excited that the Board of Directors and Pamela's leadership will carry us through an amazing year at the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto!

Miigwetch, Ay-ay, Nia:wen, We'lalin, Thank you!

NATIVE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE OF TORONTO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PROGRAMS

Trauma Support

The Trauma Support Program focuses on providing case management, advocacy, as well as access to Traditional Healers, trauma counsellors, and peer supports to Indigenous female-identifying survivors and victims of sexual violence, gender-based violence, domestic violence, harassment, discrimination, and human trafficking. We also place special emphasis on providing access to traditional healing and ceremonies through a harm-reduction, protocol-flexible framework that aims to increase accessibility for clients who would not normally have the opportunity to participate and utilize such supports during their healing journey. The Trauma Support Program also offers workshops and support groups led by various members of the team. We are currently hosting 'Tea & Bannock' weekly on Tuesdays, which is a drop-in support group for community members who identify as transgender and two-spirit, led by our Agaamikwe Peer Worker and invited guests. We also re-launched the popular Thursday evening 'Seeking Safety' support group in September of 2018 for Indigenous women who want to work on managing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms, issues with substance usage, and anger management.

Investing in Women's Future

Native women receive assistance in pursuing their employment aspirations through life skills training such as interview preparation, resumé writing, and business workshops. This year, the 'Dress for Success' program was created so that clients can access proper attire for their interviews.

For clients with an entrepreneurial spirit, the Investing in Women's Future (IWF) program offers support in developing ideas, creating business plans, and providing necessary referrals. The program has an important cultural component to it, as some women have never had the opportunity to learn about their heritage. Based on clients' needs and interests, we invite a variety of professionals and community members to come in and facilitate workshops that invite women to connect to their culture, traditions, and ancestors.

Community Wellness

The Community Wellness Worker (CWW) provides clients with family violence services, referrals, support, and case management to address/respond to existing and emerging health, healing and wellness issues, or violent situations. The program is designed to deliver primary client- and participant-based services to Indigenous individuals, families, and children. The primary focus of the programming is committed to reducing family violence and promoting cultural supports. The CWW will assist clients to develop action plans to address their health and wellness concerns. The CWW organizes and facilitates community events such as cultural events and ceremonies, education and illness prevention workshops, and health promotion programming. It also undertakes outreach supports, peer counselling, advocacy, and crisis intervention.

Family Support – Circle of Care Program

The Circle of Care program focuses on Indigenous women and their children who are involved in the child welfare system. The program also supports families who are experiencing or who have experienced violence in their lives. It is designed to support families in crisis, and to empower women to examine their current situation and create a safe space for themselves and their families.

Program activities include working closely with clients to provide a circle of care that responds to their cultural, mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual needs through collaboration with Indigenous and non-Indigenous services in the community. By creating partnerships with other service providers across sectors, this program is able to create culturally safe systems for Indigenous women to best support their family's well-being. The program also focuses on crisis management and balance, awareness, education, planning, goal setting, referrals, and conflict resolution.



Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program

The Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children (AHBHC) program is designed to ensure that all Indigenous families and their children (prenatal to age six) needing assistance with physical, emotional, mental, and social issues have access to effective, consistent early intervention services. Its aim is to provide the best opportunities for healthy child development through home visits, service coordination, parenting groups, cultural teachings, traditional programs, and referrals. As well, it addresses the needs of children at risk to ensure they have proper access to the services and support they need. The AHBHC program is voluntary and open to any Indigenous family that requests this service. It is funded through the Ministry of Community and Social Services – Indigenous Healing and Wellness Strategy Services and Supports Branch. The heart of AHBHC programming is preparation for parenting (preconception component), getting ready for the birth of the baby (prenatal care), and taking care of the baby (postnatal care).

Breaking Down Barriers

Breaking Down Barriers provides a culturally appropriate life skills training program for at-risk LGBTQ2SI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit, intersex) Indigenous women in order to improve their life choices and to provide programming that diminishes employment and training barriers.

HOUSING

Indigenous individuals are eight times more likely to experience homelessness in comparison to non-Indigenous individuals. Faced with marginalization, historical trauma, rising housing costs, and lack of culturally sound shelter services, Indigenous women rely on the housing team of NWRCT for their well-being.

Housing Outreach

The Housing Outreach Initiative at Native Women's Resource Centre provides services for housing stabilization. The program completes intakes and assessments to understand how to provide appropriate care, offering internal and external referrals where necessary. We assist clients with the housing application process, including those needing to access emergency shelters and second-stage housing. We provide eviction prevention, such as repayment plans, accompaniment, and advocacy. Housing Outreach acts as a liaison and mediator, while empowering clients' ability to navigate housing resources. The program also assists clients needing clothing, furniture, and hygiene products. Additionally, NWRCT's Housing Outreach Program holds housing workshops and community engagement events. The goal is to connect clients with safe and stable housing, emphasizing cultural and spiritual wellness.

Housing Department

The NWRCT Housing Program helps Indigenous women who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to find safe and affordable housing. The program offers support in:

- Accessing emergency shelter.
- Completing housing applications.
- Supportive and transitional housing, social housing, market rent.
- Accompaniment to housing interviews and apartment viewings.
- Writing letters of support for various services.
- Providing services for housing stabilization (referrals, provision of resources [furniture, hygiene products], pest control).

- Offering support for eviction prevention; mediation with landlords; coordination of repayment plans for arrears; facilitating workshops on varying housing issues; and providing a Personal Needs Support program, which includes accessing showers, laundry, clothing, shoes, and hygiene products (previously our Drop-In program).

The Nbaakaawin Kwe (Wisdom Woman) Education Program

The Nbaakaawin Kwe (Wisdom Woman) Education Program provides educational opportunities to Indigenous, self-identified women.

This program offers one-on-one and group instruction in English, math, workforce literacy, and basic computer skills as well as numeracy and literacy skills upgrading, supporting goals of independence, post-secondary education and/or employment within an Indigenous community setting. Individual plans and flexible hours enable women to work at their own pace. Our learning centre provides computers, a quiet study area, and tutoring space.

The Nbaakaawin Kwe Program aims to support clients in finding balance within all four quadrants of the medicine wheel of life – Mental, Spiritual, Emotional, and Physical. This is done by providing learning opportunities from an Indigenous perspective, honouring the Seven Grandfather Teachings, offering cultural programs, and making referrals to other resources.



The Pimaatsiwin Program

The Pimaatsiwin (A Good Way of Life) Parenting Program is a CAP-C program designed for primary caregivers who identify as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis women with children up to six years old, and for primary caregivers of children up to six years old who identify as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis. The Pimaatsiwin Program is a safe and comfortable place for birth families and chosen families, to gather, learn, and grow. It was created to provide women and their children and pregnant women with the opportunities that encourage healthy living, physical well-being, spiritual

well-being, mental well-being, and emotional support. The focus on this program at NWRCT is that it is to be from an Indigenous lens, with culturally specific programming and traditional supports. We offer individual parenting support, emergency baby supplies once a month, childcare for onsite programming, and weekly access to Grocery Support (Food Bank). Support comes in various forms depending on family needs. We also provide appropriate referrals and letters of family support if needed.

OUR VOLUNTEERS



Natasha Halovich

Native Women's Resource Center is grateful and honoured to have the efforts of all our volunteers who donate time and care to the Centre in different capacities every day. Chi miigwetch! for the ongoing dedication of these incredible individuals and groups who assist in providing services to the community.

Natasha Halovich, originally from Alberta, came to Toronto in 1992, running away from a volatile and unpredictable childhood compounded by family distress after her mom went missing. Natasha, determined to do things on her own, says she put up a mental block about asking for help because she was not ready. "I had a lot of anger and other issues that held me from being part of the community," she says.

In 2014, she made the decision to reach out to the community at Native Women's Resource Centre, and says the non-judgemental atmosphere empowered her to get the help she needed. She stated she could be completely honest about her childhood, her experience on the streets, and the other dangerous situations she was caught up in. Natasha states, "I decided to come to Native Women's and that is the best thing I could do because I have learned about creating healthy boundaries, about my self-worth and that I am capable of doing other things that made me grow."

Natasha speaks about a time where the staff at the Centre helped her through many issues and situations, stating she would not be here today if it weren't for NWRCT and the support it offers.

Today Natasha is an extremely valued volunteer within multiple programs and facets of the Centre. She indicates she has gained work experience to take her into the workforce as well as the confidence to move forward as an entrepreneur. Currently, Natasha has started her own moving company, is a proud mother of two, and continues to grow in her culture and traditions.



Thanks to Our Funders

A special miigwetch to our program funders for their ongoing support.

Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle – Homelessness Partnering Strategy

City of Toronto

Community Social Development

Government of Canada

Government of Ontario

Métis Nation of Ontario

Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development

Ministry of Community and Social Services

Ministry of Status of Women – Innovation Fund

Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training

Ontario Native Women's Association – Circle of Care Indigenous Anti Human Trafficking Fund

Ontario Trillium Foundation – Local Poverty Reduction Fund

Public Health Agency of Canada

Shelter Support and Housing Administration

Toronto Urban Health Fund

FINANCIAL
STATEMENT

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As At March 31	2018	2017
ASSETS		
Current:		
Cash	\$ 1,022,469	\$ 717,466
Accounts and Grants Receivable	299,478	144,458
Prepaid Expenses	4,386	4,007
	1,326,333	865,932
Property and Equipment (Net)	1,653,449	1,695,853
	\$ 2,979,782	\$ 2,561,785
LIABILITIES		
Current:		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$ 254,291	\$ 109,741
Deferred Revenue	190,171	182,360
	444,462	292,101
Deferred Capital Contributions	1,489,244	1,530,153
	1,933,706	1,822,254
NET ASSETS		
Operating Fund	821,121	513,081
Building Fund	164,205	165,700
Internally Restricted Reserve Fund	60,750	60,750
	1,046,076	739,531
	\$ 2,979,782	\$ 2,561,785

Summarized Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets

For the Year Ended March 31	2018	2017
REVENUES		
Grants:		
Federal	\$ 88,180	\$ 103,130
Provincial	819,250	518,238
City of Toronto	278,361	289,494
Other	948,860	618,626
	2,134,651	1,529,488
EXPENSES	1,828,106	1,447,856
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ 306,545	\$ 81,632
NET ASSETS – OPENING	\$ 739,531	\$ 657,899
NET ASSETS – CLOSING	\$ 1,046,076	\$ 739,531

Independent Auditors' Report on Summarized Financial Statements

To the Directors of Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto, Inc.

The accompanying summarized financial statements, which comprise the summarized statement of financial position as at March 31, 2018 and the summarized statement of operations and changes in net assets are derived from the audited financial statements of Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto, Inc. for the year ended March 31, 2018. We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated September 18, 2018. Those financial statements, and the summarized financial statements, do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on those financial statements.

The summarized financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summarized financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto, Inc.

Management's Responsibility for the Summarized Financial Statements:

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility:

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summarized financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, "Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements".

Opinion:

In our opinion, the summarized financial statements derived from the audited financial statements of Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto, Inc. for the year ended March 31, 2018 are a fair summary of those financial statements, in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Hogg, Shain & Scheck PC

Toronto, Ontario
September 18, 2018

Authorized to practice public accounting by the
Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario



**LEADERSHIP
+ OPERATIONS**

NWRCT has experienced great change and high turnover including Board Members, the Executive Director, and a large percentage of the program team. We thank each individual for their time and efforts with the Centre and welcome the following for the new fiscal year:

Present Staff 2018

Pamela Hart – Executive Director

Daniela Arango – Executive Assistant

Lindsey Lickers – Trauma Support Manager

Ashley Kagige – Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children

Colleen Wise – Housing Coordinator

Pauline Mckay / Christine Hayhurst – Pimaatisiwin Coordinators

Terez Szoke – Education Coordinator

Heather Savage – Education Assistant

April Beaton – Finance Department

Jasmine Peters – Investing in Women’s Future

Jennifer Hupalo – Housing Outreach

Maybella Reynolds – Agaamikwe Peer Worker

Sharon Reddick – Trauma Support Coordinator

Tesla Hunter – Community Wellness

Tisha Rouse – Family Support Worker

Mary Anne Shoefly – Traditional Healer

Judy Sackony – Traditional Healer

Your Donations Make a Difference

When you support the work of Native Women’s Resource Centre of Toronto, you are helping hundreds of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit women in the Toronto area, and taking an active role in the national process of reconciliation.

Native Women’s Resource Centre of Toronto is a registered charitable organization, and your donation will be eligible for a tax receipt.

MAKE A SECURE ONLINE DONATION NOW
Visit www.nwrct.ca Charitable Registration Number: 103838223RR0001



NATIVE  **WOMEN'S**
RESOURCE CENTRE OF TORONTO

191 Gerrard Street East, Toronto, ON M5A 2E5
416-963-9963 www.nwrct.ca www.twitter.com/nwrct

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